

Driving investment, infrastructure and industry forward

Discussion paper

We're planning for the City of Whittlesea's economic future and are poised to become a leading destination for investment, industry and inclusive growth. This paper explores the strategic advantages of our location, and the bold steps needed to unlock its full economic potential over the next ten years. A draft strategy will be shared for public feedback in 2026 – but we'd love to hear your thoughts now on the ideas and opportunities ahead.

Unlocking investment for economic growth

Harnessing national investment and connectivity for local impact

Major infrastructure projects, such as the Beveridge Intermodal Precinct, strategically located in the City of Whittlesea, are unlocking new corridors for investment across Victoria and interstate. Leveraging its location and assets can attract high-value industries and long-term economic development.

Opportunities:

- Federal and state infrastructure investment is accelerating the development of transport, logistics and energy corridors across Victoria, creating new platforms for regional economic growth.
- The expansion of national freight and logistics networks, including intermodal hubs like Beveridge Intermodal Precinct, is reshaping supply chains and enabling new distribution and export capabilities.
- Melbourne's northern growth is generating demand for coordinated land use, transport upgrades and investment attraction – positioning the region at the centre of a high-growth corridor.

Manufacturing the future

Australia's shift toward clean manufacturing and circular economy practices is reshaping industrial sectors, and the City of Whittlesea is well positioned to attract investment and innovation in sustainable production.

Opportunities:

- National and global demand for cleantech and circular economy solutions is driving investment in sustainable manufacturing and resource recovery.
- Industry transformation in food, beverage and logistics is creating new markets for advanced processing and environmentally responsible production.
- Government incentives and policy shifts are supporting the growth of low-emissions industries, creating momentum for clean manufacturing hubs.

Building the northern knowledge corridor

Major health infrastructure projects and growing demand for skilled professionals are creating new opportunities for Whittlesea to become a centre for health, education and research.

Opportunities:

- Significant investment in public and private health infrastructure is driving demand for clinical and allied health professionals across Melbourne's growing northern corridor.
- National health workforce shortages are prompting investment in training pipelines and education partnerships.
- Universities and research institutions are seeking new locations to expand their reach, particularly in growth regions like Melbourne's north.
- Prioritising and supporting investment into Epping MAC as the new city centre and Cloverton in the north.

Tapping into the digital transformation of industry and services

Digital disruption is reshaping every sector, and the City of Whittlesea can harness this momentum to support a tech-enabled economy that encourages innovation, resilience and inclusion.

Opportunities:

- National investment in broadband, mobile coverage and smart city infrastructure is creating new foundations for digital innovation.
- The rise of AI, automation and remote work is transforming business models and creating demand for digitally skilled workers.
- Small to medium enterprises and startups are increasingly seeking digitally connected locations with access to co-working spaces and tech support.

Activating culture, nature and identity for economic impact

Growing interest in eco-tourism, cultural experiences and placemaking presents an opportunity for the City of Whittlesea to activate its natural and cultural assets as economic drivers.

Opportunities:

- Tourism trends are shifting toward nature-based and culturally immersive experiences, increasing demand for destinations that offer environmental connection, cultural storytelling and community-led experiences.
- National recognition of First Peoples' heritage is driving investment in cultural infrastructure and community-led tourism.
- Placemaking and creative industries are being embraced as tools for economic development and social cohesion across Australia.

THE FACTS



43% increase in population
to more than 361,800
residents by 2040^{1a}



\$5 billion
in exports^{3a}



16,345 residents are
employed in the Health Care
and Social Assistance sector^{4a}



23% increase in
building approval values
from 2021 to 2040^{5a}

Data sources:

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Region Population Growth 2024, Place Info 2025
2. National Institute of Economic and Industry Research 2024
3. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021
4. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Building Approvals, Australia 2025
- a. City of Whittlesea

Barriers to strategic advantage

Strained infrastructure and transport challenges

The surge in population growth has placed significant pressure on transport networks and industrial capacity.

- Road networks are under increasing pressure, with congestion affecting freight movement, commuter travel and emergency response times.
- Public transport connectivity remains hindered, particularly in growth areas, limiting access to jobs, education and services.
- Inconsistent access to utilities such as power, water and broadband in industrial zones is deterring investment and slowing business operations.

Digital connectivity gaps

Digital infrastructure has not kept pace with growth, which can limit productivity and access to essential services.

- Telecommunications black spots and unreliable internet persist in semi-rural and newly developed areas, limiting access to education, healthcare and remote work opportunities.
- Poor connectivity reduces business competitiveness, particularly for small to medium enterprises and startups that rely on digital tools, cloud services and online platforms to operate and grow.

Regional competition and identity

Neighbouring local government areas are actively attracting investment through branding and incentives, and the City of Whittlesea needs to position its economic identity.

- Competing local government areas are offering streamlined approvals, targeted incentives and bold branding strategies, raising the bar for regional investment attraction and requiring a sharper, more distinctive value proposition.
- A unified brand or strategic positioning can enable the region to stand out in a crowded investment landscape.
- Varying messaging and lack of coordinated promotion can dilute the region's appeal, making it harder to attract anchor tenants, cluster development and catalytic investment.
- Promoting the unique strengths, such as cultural diversity, strategic location or emerging industry clusters, may result in faster economic growth and increased competitiveness.

Global insights: models that inspire local action

Across Australia and globally, local councils have successfully leveraged their unique strengths to drive economic growth, attract investment and boost innovation. Valuable insights can be gained to shape the future for the City of Whittlesea.

Long-term planning for sustainability, Freiburg (Germany)

Freiburg's integrated approach to infrastructure and environmental planning has created a thriving, future-ready economy.

- The city invested early in renewable energy, green buildings and public transport to support both environmental and economic outcomes.
- Long-term planning to deliver civic infrastructure first has built investor confidence and improved liveability across the region.
- Freiburg's success shows that aligning infrastructure with sustainability goals can unlock long-term economic resilience and community wellbeing.

Jurong Innovation District, Singapore

Singapore's Jurong Innovation District shows how clustering advanced manufacturing, education and research can drive innovation and skilled employment.

- The district integrates high-tech industry with tertiary education and research institutions to support talent development.
- Strategic infrastructure investment has created a globally competitive innovation hub.
- Jurong demonstrates that co-locating industry and education accelerates innovation and strengthens the pipeline of skilled talent for emerging industries.

Turbine Precinct, Sunshine Coast (QLD)

The Turbine Precinct demonstrates how regional collaboration can accelerate growth in priority sectors like food and beverage manufacturing.

- The precinct brings together producers, researchers and entrepreneurs to drive innovation and export capability.
- Shared infrastructure and support services reduce barriers to entry and scale.
- The Turbine Precinct proves that collaborative environments can fast-track regional industry growth and global competitiveness.

Imagining the City of Whittlesea's future:

- How might the City of Whittlesea coordinate investment across freight, energy, and transport infrastructure to evolve into Australia's most connected logistics and clean manufacturing corridor?
- How can opportunities be built upon in the emerging health and research precinct in Epping?
- In what ways could the City of Whittlesea's cultural, natural, and digital assets be activated to position the region as a globally recognised destination for eco-tourism, creative industries and smart city innovation?



HAVE YOUR SAY

For more information and to tell us what matters to you, visit engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Scan the QR code to have your say!



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interpreter service
131 450

Arabic خدمة الترجمة الشفهية الهاتفية المجانية
Chinese Simplified 免费电话传译服务
Chinese Traditional 免費電話傳譯服務
Greek Δωρεάν τηλεφωνική υπηρεσία διερμηνέων
Italian Servizio di interpretariato telefonico gratuito

Macedonian Бесплатна телефонска услуга за преведување
Persian/Farsi خدمات مترجم شفاهی تلفنی رایگان
Punjabi ਸ਼ੁਫ਼ਤ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੇਵਾ
Turkish Ücretsiz telefonla tercümanlık hizmeti
Vietnamese Dịch vụ thông dịch qua điện thoại miễn phí



**City of
Whittlesea**